

Downtown Development District Board of Commissioners Meeting  
Ronald E. Gardner Board Room  
Tuesday, March 11, 2025– 3:00 PM  
**In Person**  
**201 St. Charles Avenue, Suite 3912**

Roll taken, Quorum present – Meeting called to order at 3:06 p.m.

**Members Present:** Chair Chris Ross, Vice-Chair Alex Glaser, Treasurer William Bradshaw, II, Secretary Scott Polakoff, Jr. Commissioner Gregory Curtis, Commissioner Ryan King, Commissioner David Piscola, Commissioner Kenny Rubenstein, Commissioner Frank Zumbo, Commissioner Edwin Murray

**Members Absent:** Commissioner Miles Tully,

**Staff/Counsel Present:** President & CEO Davon Barbour, Michael McKnight, CFO, Christophe Kane, Counsel, Adams & Reese,

**Notice:** The time, location, and agenda had been adequately and publicly noticed

**Call for Public Input Cards:** N/A

**Public Comments:** N/A

**Action Items:**

Approval of Meeting Minutes from January 2025, Board Meeting – **Action Item\***  
Motion to approve made by Commissioner Piscola, second by Commissioner Curtis.

**Captain Samuel Palumbo 8<sup>th</sup> District & Major Precious Banks:**

Discussed his background and his experience. He spoke about the effort to reduce violent crime and will send weekly stats. He discussed the possibility of meeting one on one with the commissioners. He was asked about the staffing levels in the 8<sup>th</sup> district, which has about 84 staff members.

**Manning Architects:**

Presented a vision for 6 parks with conceptual designs accompanying each space:

1. Mississippi River Heritage Park
2. St. Mary's Park
3. Legacy Park
4. Lafayette Square
5. Piazza d'Italia
6. Molly Marine Plaza

The focus was on improving safety, accessibility, seating, signage, and infrastructure for events. The next step is to secure funding.

**Note:** In accordance with the provisions of the Louisiana Open Meetings Law (La. R.S. 42:11 et seq.) the Board of Commissioners of the DDD may go into Executive Session to discuss legal or personnel matters.

Michael McKnight, CFO (complete financial report is in the board packet)

**January 2025 Financial Status Report:**

- Dr. McKnight presented a flow chart explaining how the DDD receives its funding through property assessments, tax collections and reimbursement warrants.
- The January 2025 financial report is reviewed, showing \$99,080.38 in revenue and \$1,055,996.08 in expenses. The board raises questions about the lag in receiving funds, the process of building reserves, and what happens to excess funds. The Finance Committee plans to follow up on these questions and provide more information to the board.

Motion to approve January 2025 Financial report made by the Finance Committee and second by Commissioner Murray.

Chuck Bourg, Chief of Public Safety and Field Operations:

- Provided an update on various aspects of the Downtown Development District's operations. He reported on the public safety outpost at 100 Royal Street, which is staffed by Rangers daily from 6 AM to 10 PM. Chuck says he has visited Rangers and toured different zones of the district to understand their operations better. He also discussed the clean team's impressive performance during Mardi Gras, the ongoing tree maintenance and landscaping efforts, and plans for future district improvements. He mentioned participating in the upcoming District B neighborhood cleanup day in April and addressed issues with the expired tree maintenance contract.

Rene Pastorek, Chief of Economic Development

- Reported on advocacy efforts, including resubmitting grant applications.
- Business recruitment and retention with outreach to businesses and property owners
- In the process of developing the state of downtown report
- Continued partnerships with various organizations.
- Completed biodistrict lighting audit, parks activation plan.
- He will compile a list of projects for future grant applications.
- He will present infrastructure issues at the next Super Gras meeting.
- DDD will have a booth on Wednesdays at the Square
- DDD will work with GNO, Inc., to recoup unspent funds (\$160K) from the Super Bowl projects and propose 5 new projects to the \$160K allocation.
- He hopes to complete the property tax data mapping by summer.

Jared Brossett, Director of Public Policy & External Affairs

- The board discussed the need for a baseline service agreement with the city to ensure the Downtown Development District (DDD) provides services above what is customarily provided. Commissioner Prescola suggested the board should drive this conversation and present a draft to the new administration in January 2026.
- The board also reviewed the timeline for renewing the DDD millage tax, which expires in 2029. Jared recommends starting the renewal process in early 2027 for a fall ballot, with a potential second attempt in 2028 if needed. Counsel Kane suggested the process should start earlier. The board has agreed to create a project plan and timeline for this process at the next meeting.
- Chair Ross will work with Jared Brossett to develop a system for millage renewal.

**President's report: N/A**

**Old Business: N/A**

**New Business:**

- Troy Henry, Henry Consulting, discussed two key issues related to their contract. The first issue was about the city's living wage ordinance and whether the DDD would adhere to it. The second issue was about the excessive cleaning required in the 100-block of Carondelet, which was diverting resources from other areas.
- DDD staff will engage with city department regarding code enforcement issues at 100 Carondelet.
- DDD staff to consider inviting Code enforcement to address cleanliness issues at problematic locations like 100 Carondelet and Natchez Alley

Commissioner Murray asked staff to research Jean Nathan's contract status.

**Executive Session:** Motion to enter executive session made by Commissioner Piscola, second by Commissioner Zumbo. Roll was called. Motion carried. The Board entered Executive Session. The Board came out of the Executive Session. Roll was called and upon the advice of counsel no action was taken during the Executive Session

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Vice Chair Alex Glaser would like to recognize and thank Chair Ross for all the excellent work he has done and continues to do.

Vice Chair Alex Glaser thanks French Truck Coffee for their donations to the DDD Security Outpost

**Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Piscola, second by Commissioner Rubenstein. Motion carried.